the Union Ministry of Tourism provides financial asistance to the States/ UTs for the projects, which are prioritized in consultation with them every year under its various schemes. For the State of Orissa, during 2002-03 to 2004-05, 14 projects have been prioritized and an amount of about Rs. 1818 lakh sanctioned.

Closure of Petrol Pumps in Uttar Pradesh

*395. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that oil mafia is operating in Uttar Pradesh in a big way;

(b) if so, what Government are doing to ensure unadulterated oil and LPG supply in Uttar Pradesh;

(c) whether Government are aware that LPG is being mixed with water and such dealers have not been prosecuted yet;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) how many petrol pumps sealed in Uttar Pradesh and dealers prosecuted so far?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (d) The possibility of adulteration of petrol/diesel by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to huge price difference between petrol/diesel and various adulterants available in the market and the easy miscibility of these products with petrol/diesel. Government are aware of reports of mafia operations in Uttar Pradesh, but the primary responsibility for dealing with such law and order issue vests, under the Constitution, with the State Governments. The recent alleged murder of a sales officer of IOC in the state in connection with an inspection he was conducting has caused considerable concern. Secretary, Petroleum recently took a meeting on this with State Chief Secretaries and their representatives

The action taken by the Government/Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) in containing the menace of adulteration in petrol/ diesel include the following:—

(i) Under the Control Orders issued by the Government to prevent fuel adulteration, under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. State Governments are empowered to take action against those indulging in adulteration. Government have taken up this matter with all the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations to step up inspections/surprise checks to ensure that adulteration-related activities are minimized and to exercise vigil/conduct inspections at various private firms, factories, processing units, etc., under their jurisdictions so as to identify the perpetrators of adulteration and take stringent action against them within the available legal framework.

(ii) OMCs undertake regular and surprise inspections of Retail Outlets and also take action under Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG) and Dealership Agreements against those indulging in adulteration and malpractices. MDG provide for penalty of termination of dealership in cases of adulteration being established.

(iii) As advised by the Government, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have created a separate wing to report to a Director other than Director (Marketing), which will oversee and monitor all activities and operations to curb adulteration and specify norms and guidelines in this regard.

(iv) Keeping in view the misuse/diversion of SKO for adulteration, the import of SKO by private parties has been canalized through OMCs.

(v) OMCs have introduced new tamper proof tank-truck locking systems to prevent enroute adulteration by transporters.

(vi) Information Technology (IT) solutions like monitoring movement of tank trucks through Global Positioning System (GPS) and monitoring level of fuel tanks in Retail Outlets through retail automation are being introduced.

(vii) Branding of Retail Outlets and third party certification of Retail Outlets have been initiated by the OMCs.

(viii) Effective 2nd October 2005, Government launched the Jan Kerosene Pariyojana as a pilot project in 417 blocks covering 23 States and one Union Territory for a period of six months with a view to strengthening and streamlining the infrastructure for kerosene distribution and involving the Gram Sabhas and Gram Panchayats and State Panchayati Raj Institutions in the supervision of PDS kerosene distribution, so as to ensure that entitled beneficiaries actually receive their entitlement and diversion to adulteration and black-marketing is capped, reversed and eventually eliminated.

Measures to check adulteration are kept under continuous review of the Government.

As regards LPG, adulteration in LPG cylinders is physically quite difficult. However, IOC detected one case of an LPG cylinder containing water in Bareilly (U.P.) during 2004-05. The LPG cylinder was replaced free of cost to the customer. Action by way of imposition of fine was taken against the distributor under the Marketing discipline Guidelines (MDG).

(e) During the current year, out of 5337 inspections conducted by the OMCs in U.P., 98 cases of malpractices were detected. OMCs terminated 11 Retails Outlets (ROs), suspended sales and supplies in 51 cases and imposed fines in 2 cases.

New technique on exploration of crude oil

†*396. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that with the invention of a scientific technique by a Norwagian Science and Technology University, Trondheim, recovery of crude oil from oil rigs goes upto 60 percent; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and whether it is a fact that an agreement has also been reached between ONGC and the said institute in this regard?

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.